A. The current efforts underway in North Kitsap School District are as follows:

1. All counselors have been trained in the following suicide prevention curriculum:

   a. High school curriculum (grades 9-12) - The *Helping Every Living Person: Depression and Suicide Prevention Curriculum (HELP)* educates students about depression and suicide prevention. The HELP Curriculum is based on the American Association of Suicidology (AAS) Guidelines for School-based Suicide Prevention Programs. HELP consists of four 45-minute lesson plans. Topics include:

      • **Stress and Depression** - provides students with a framework for how stress and depression impact the lives of teens and how to address the issue in the lives of those they care about.

      • **Signs and Causes of Suicidal Behavior** - discusses the warning signs of suicide in order to provide students a framework for understanding what to look for in youth who are at risk for suicide.

      • **Suicide Intervention Skills** - identifies what is helpful when intervening with a friend at risk of suicide and identifies specific intervention skills.

      • **Suicide Intervention Skills Practice and Role-Play** - uses facilitated role-play as a way to practice intervention skills and identify solutions to obstacles (real or otherwise) that could get in the way of helping.

   b. Middle school curriculum (grades 6-8) *LOOK LISTEN LINK* - This is a curriculum designed for middle school youth. It consists of four 45-minute lessons that aim to teach students about:

      • **Stress and Anxiety** - gives students a framework for how stress and anxiety impact their lives and how they can relieve stress in simple ways.

      • **Dealing with Stress and Anxiety** - provides students with a deeper understanding of healthy ways to deal with stress and anxiety and allows them to explore how to help a friend who is under a lot of stress.

      • **Teen Depression** - gives students a complete picture of how teens experience depression and how to address the issue with their friends.

      • **Suicide Prevention and Skills Practice** - introduces facts about the warning signs of suicide and emphasizes how to help a friend by using the skills of *looking* and *listening* for those warning signs and *linking* a friend to a trusted adult.

   c. Elementary school curriculum *Riding the Waves* (5th grade) - This curriculum’s overarching goal is to build the emotional skills within children to prevent suicide at its earliest stages. Lessons address the following:

      • Healthy emotional development

      • Coping and emotion regulation skills

      • How to get help for yourself or a friend

      • Depression and anxiety
2. Implementation of Peer to Peer Education (AKA Lifesavers) This is a program where middle and high school students develop their own campaigns using Washington State Youth Suicide Prevention Program materials to promote awareness. This can include youth work with faculty/staff liaison to provide one or more of the following activities:

- Students choose a campaign slogan, design and wear t-shirts that emphasize campaign messages and host informational tables at lunchtime or conduct classroom presentations.
- Hang posters in every classroom and/or throughout the school.
- Teach an informational presentation about suicide prevention to peers or younger students.
- Host a video or art contest about suicide prevention.
- Hold an event building awareness of suicide prevention in the school or community.
- Design another appropriate prevention campaign of their choosing.

YSPP can provide technical assistance and resources such as posters, buttons, t-shirts, key chains and more.

3. Training school counselors in the Networks for Life: An Educator’s Role in Youth Suicide Prevention –

   This is a three-hour training on suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention in the school setting. It is designed for use in Washington State and covers:

   - The scope of youth suicide locally
   - Risk and protective factors
   - School policies, procedures, and crisis response plans
   - Strategies for creating a preventive culture
   - Signs of depression and suicidal thinking in adolescents
   - A basic 3-step intervention process
   - Local resources
   - Best practices in postvention and the prevention of suicide contagion

The training emphasizes the schools’ important and unique role in youth suicide prevention and gives participants specific, easy-to-use tools. Discussions, brainstorms, practice scenarios, and opportunities to review policies and resources are included.

4. Collaborative partnership with the OESD to provide two Student Assistance Professionals (SAP)vi at each High School (part-time at NKHS and Full-time at KHS) and Mental Health Counselors (MHC)vii at two of the greatest need elementary schools. The SAPs and MHCs conduct behavioral health screenings on students referred for services, provide brief intervention and case management, individual and group counseling, and school-wide positive behavioral health awareness activities.

B. In the works:

1. Adoption of a School District Suicide Prevention Plan

2. Scheduling is in the works for all school staff K-12 to be trained in suicide prevention, risk and protective factors, warning signs and how to connect students to resources.
C. Suggestions:

1. Review postvention processes, following the tips in *After the Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools* by the American Foundation for Suicide/Suicide Prevention Resource Center, and make sure they are consistent across schools. Postvention should include an announcement that is made to all students through the classroom teachers. The counseling support “safe room” should be made available to all students. Students at greatest risk are identified and follow-up is being conducted either with the student or their parent(s) if they are not in school.

2. Review procedures for counselor interventions for consistency and have senior counselors train and assist new counselors in suicide intervention techniques.

3. Explore with OESD the options for implementing evidence-based group counseling supports.

4. Look into hosting a parent/community awareness training, distributing information and/or posting resource links on the school website using the safe messaging guidelines from YSPP website.

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i Developed by Washington State’s Youth Suicide Prevention Program and listed on the SPRC website as a best practice.

ii Developed by Washington State’s Youth Suicide Prevention Program and listed on the SPRC website as a best practice; and is the first middle-school level suicide prevention program in the nation earning “Best Practice” status from the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC).

iii Note NKSD elementary counselors may have implemented other social emotional and behavioral curriculum such as Second Step.

iv Riding the Waves is not on the Best Practice Registry because the curriculum focuses on social, emotional learning and not specific to a suicide prevention curriculum. However, it does talk about depression and help-seeking, it doesn’t actually mention suicide except in the name of the agency. Therefore, SPRC did not categorize it as a best practice.

v Currently at NKHS

vi Funding for SAP services are provided through Kitsap County Mental Health, Chemical Dependency and Therapeutic Court Programs 1/10th of 1% Sales and Use Tax Funds and through Washington States Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant known as Community Wellness Initiative Program in collaboration with the Department of Behavioral Health and Recovery and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (CFDA#93.959).

wii Funding for Mental Health Counseling services are provided through Kitsap County Mental Health, Chemical Dependency and Therapeutic Court Programs 1/10th of 1% Sales and Use Tax Funds.